Cell for Ayurveda in the SAARC Secretariat

797. SHRI KHAN GHUFRAN ZAHIDI: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have any proposal to set up a cell for Ayurveda in the SAARC Secretariat; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI JASWANT SINGH): (a) and (b) There is no proposal at present for setting up an Ayurvedic Cell in the SAARC Secretariat. At its meeting held in Colombo on August 12—14, 1999, the SAARC Technical Committee on Health, Population and Child Welfare, had held discussion *inter-alia* on cooperation in traditional systems of medicine.

Test of "Kill Vehicle" by United States

798. SHRI E. BALANANDAN: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news-item that the US has conducted tests of the "Kill Vehicle" devised under the "Star Wars" nuclear programme and the proposed missile could have many parts of Asia within its range;

(b) whether Government are aware that this move of the US is in violation of the 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty; and

(c) if so, Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI JASWANT SINGH): (a) and (b) Yes Sir. In October 1999 the US successfully tested an interceptor that destroyed a dummy in-coming ballistic missile using "hit-to-kill" technology. A subsequent test in January 2000 failed and further tests are planned. These tests are part of the US programme to develop defence systems against different kinds of missiles. Russia has stated that the testing and plans for deployment of such systems will be inconsistent with the bilateral 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty that prohibits deployment